

Contributed

BAPTISM FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF INTELLIGENCE.

"What is the action performed in Christian baptism? The action performed in Christian baptism is immersion in water." "Can there be Christian baptism without immersion? No." "Why ought Baptists not to take the Lord's Supper with believers of other denominations? Because we think they have not been baptized, or are not walking orderly as to Church connection." (A catechism of Bible Teachings by John A. Broadus, pp. 32, 33, 34). Dr. W. H. Whitsitt writes of the Anabaptists, "they had quitted the defensive to assume an aggressive position by styling themselves 'the baptized churches.' * * * * After the adoption of immersion, it was easy to insist that those who practised it were alone 'baptized people,' emphasis being laid not only upon the subjects as formerly, but also upon the mode of baptism. This latter emphasis was indicated by the name Baptist." Johnson's Univ. Ency., Ed. 1894, Vol. 1, p. 489). This then is the imposing attitude of our brethren of the Baptist Church they plainly declare that they only have been baptized, that the rest of us have not been baptized, because we have not been baptized by immersion, and therefore they refuse to recognize us as in the Church of Christ, and to fellowship us as such. Face to face with such an exclusive claim, it is worth our while to ask who is this people that make such an exclusive claim to the rite of baptism? Whence came they? Who are they? How many is their number? What is their religious history? What is their history touching this exclusive claim? This question of the mode of baptism is not a fact of experience, but a question of the correct interpretation of an intelligible Book, the Bible; what is their claim to the exclusive right to interpret correctly this Book? On the other hand it is a matter of some interest, who are they that are excluded from the Church by this claim, are they few in number, the heretics of a day, of no religious standing, and no claim to the right to interpret this intelligible Book?

As to the age of the Church of our Baptist friends who make this claim, their own historians (Whitsitt and McGlothlin) tracing their origin, say the "movement originated * * * between Jan. 18 and 25, 1525." As to their source, Dr. McGlothlin plainly says "all their leaders, so far as their lives are known, come out of the Catholic Church." As to their religious history, they have taught all kinds of doctrines from the rankest type of Arminianism to the extreme form of Calvinism, "sometimes falling into Socinian denial of the deity of Christ and Pelagian denial of original sin" (Newman), Arminianism continuing until quite recently, 75 or 90 years ago, to be the prevailing type of theology. As to their numbers, Dr. Newman says, "count-

ing all nominally Baptist bodies throughout the world, the present number is about 6,000,000." As to their intellectual qualifications to interpret a Book, their own historian (Dr. Newman) writes of them in this country, "which claims more than five-sixths of the 'nominally Baptist bodies throughout the world' that until about ninety-five years ago they were uneducated and even illiterate, to quote his language: 'by the beginning of this period,' 1812, 'they were deficient in culture and had almost no provision for an educated ministry': 'the vast majority of American Baptists at this time regarded ministerial education as an impertinent human effort to exercise the divine prerogative of calling and equipping ministers': 'the tendency was to neglect the towns * * * where enthusiastic and illiterate ministers were less acceptable.' But when this is said, we have not yet felt the full weight of the intellectual competency of our Baptist friends to interpret this Book for us until we have asked, Who are they? And Dr. Newman tells us "Counting all nominally Baptist bodies throughout the world, the present number of Baptists is about 6,000,000," he further informs us "the present membership" "of the Colored Baptists" "according to the statistician of the National Baptist Convention (1905) being 2,189,000." (New Schaff-Herzog, Vol. 1, pp. 476, 480.) Now what will we say of the intellectual competency of this 2,189,000, more than one third of the whole of the church? Considering then that this Church until a few years ago was opposed to an educated ministry, and that of its "present number throughout the world" more than one third are negroes; what claim has this body of people so arrogantly to plead an exclusive right to interpret correctly a Book, the Bible, touching the mode of baptism, so as to make them say to us dogmatically "You haven't been baptized"? But we haven't yet seen the full force of this argument: Dr. Newman after telling us of the number of Baptists throughout the world, in his desire to roll up the number of immersionists, adds: "If to these other bodies of anti-Pedobaptist immersionists be added, the number is increased to about 7,500,000." This figure includes all Campbellites, Mennonites, and all immersionists in the world of Protestant Christendom. Of the age, religious history, and intellectual qualifications of our Campbellite friends to judge in this matter we all know.

Now against this put the following:

Methodists	6,838,779
Lutherans	2,082,766
Presbyterians	2,264,104
Episcopalian	893,972
Congregationalists	650,000 (?)

A total 12,729,621

Here then we have the statistics of just five of the leading Protestant religious bodies in the United States and yet their membership in this country alone (and it should be borne in mind that the main strength of the Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Lutherans is in other

countries) totals 12,729,621 against 7,500,000 immersionists of all kinds "throughout the world." Every one of these five Churches, except the Methodist has a claim to as great age as the Baptist, and we may say a just claim to a more evangelical, as consistent and as religious a history as our Baptist friends. Every one of these, with a modified exception of the Methodists, has been through all these years a friend to education and learning, and each has made educational qualification a condition to entrance into the ministry. Four of these haven't enough negro membership to count, and all together, even including the large membership of the Methodist Church, haven't as many negroes as our Baptist friends. Once more will any man in any ordinary community claim that the Baptists are more conscientious in interpreting the Bible than are Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians? In other matters that concern the interpretation of a book, we appeal to the most learned, the most conscientious, and stable characters, if in this we make our appeal so, what will be our judgment as to the claims of our Baptist friends? If it were not so serious and so sacred a thing we would not hesitate to say it is ridiculous, the boldest bigotry and egotism. It is passing strange that the people would be so easily teased by their claims.

Analyze those statistics, "7,500,000 immersionists," the proportion to the professing Christian world, the intellectual and religious character of these exclusive claimants, and tell me which is the more reasonable view of baptism, the interpretation of our immersionist friends or those who practice affusion?

Troupe, Texas, S. M. Tenney.

OPEN-AIR PREACHING TO JEWS.

By Rev. Thomas M. Chalmers.

The opportunity for street preaching among the million Jews of Greater New York is simply wonderful. We have been feeling our way on this line, and find the door is open for a wide development. That Jews today will enter halls to hear the gospel is clear from what can be seen in London, Chicago, and New York. A case in point is the work of Rev. B. Angel of the New York City Mission, who after fourteen years' effort has secured a regular audience of from 200 to 300 Jews. But great multitudes of Jews will never be reached if we use this method alone. So the street work is imperative.

The writer, a Gentile, after years of experience among Jews elsewhere, began work in the great New York field in April, 1908, having first organized the New York Jewish Evangelization Society. Our mission, located in the lower east side among 450,000 Jews, is in a very encouraging state. Here and in Brownsville, where we have charge of the Jewish work for men of the Brooklyn City Mission and Tract Society, we have two open-air meetings weekly, each attended by several hundred Jewish men,